



Senators Gomes and Miner, Representative Porter, and Members of the Labor Committee, my name is Jillian Gilchrest and I am a co-organizer with Women's March Connecticut and Board Member of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. I submit the following written testimony in support of five bills that promote the economic security of Connecticut's women and families;

H.B. 5043: An Act Promoting a Fair, Civil and Harassment-free Workplace

H.B. 5388 An Act Concerning a Fair Minimum Wage

H.B. 5386: An Act Concerning Various Pay Equity and Fairness Measures.

S.B. 1: An Act Concerning Earned Family and Medical Leave &

H.B. 5387: An Act Concerning Paid Family Medical Leave.

In 2012, while working for the Connecticut Association for Human Services I formed Connecticut's Family Medical Leave Insurance Coalition, a group of organizations interested in offering paid family and medical leave to Connecticut workers. Since then, our state has established a task force to study the feasibility, contracted with a consultant to create an implementation plan, and advocates have built a coalition of hundreds of people, businesses, and organizations who all support a system of paid family & medical leave in Connecticut. We have studied this issue and the proposal before you is strong. Paid family and medical leave is good for workers, good for businesses, and good for our state. We have answered the who, what, where, and why of paid family and medical leave. The when is now.

Fair wages, a harassment-free workplace, and pay equity are all essential policies that help women. And, women's earnings are critical to economic growth. Women should not be harassed during the work day. Women should not have to live in poverty if they work 40, 50, 60 or 70 hours a week. Women should not have their salary history used to set future pay.

Connecticut lawmakers have an opportunity to ensure that all workers are paid what they deserve, at least \$15 an hour, in an environment free from harassment and supported when they need time out of work to care for themselves, a loved one, or a baby. I hope the Committee will vote favorably this year to make this a reality for all Connecticut workers.